

*News to Educate, Engage, and Empower Entrepreneurs*

## NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK CELEBRATIONS ABOUND ACROSS NEBRASKA



Nebraska can be justifiably proud of the tremendous array of events that took place during National Entrepreneurship Week, February 20-27.

As always, our state was one of the most active, if not THE most active state in planning and hosting events to celebrate the importance of entrepreneurship to our state and national economies.

Members of the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) have served as the catalysts to make National Entrepreneurship Week such an annual success in our state.

NET-Force is an all-volunteer collaboration of entrepreneurship educators and entrepreneurship advocates who are passionate about the task force's core mission. That mission—to Educate, Engage, and Empower Entrepreneurs.

### GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION

Members of the task force were on hand when Governor Heineman signed a proclamation for Entrepreneurship Week at the Nebraska State Capitol on February 11th. With that as the "starting gun" for the upcoming array of exciting events, Nebraskans began the annual celebration.



NET-Force members gathered in the State Capitol for the E-Week Proclamation by Governor Heineman.

NET-Force members and others on hand for the proclamation signing included Gregg Christensen, Nebraska Department of Education; Carol Ringenberg, Nebraska Department of Education and Entrepreneurship Instructor for Southeast Community College; Diane Vigna, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ESI, Community Connections); Travis Pillen, Students in Free Enterprise, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Monica Braun, Rural Enterprise Assistance Program-Center for Rural Affairs; Kathleen Eitzmann, Southeast Community College; Nancy Eberle, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ESI, Community Connections); and Doris Lux, E-Ship Center/Business Administration-Central Community College.

### *Inside this issue:*

National Entrepreneurship Week Celebrations Abound Across Nebraska	1-3
First Annual Quick Pitch Competition is a Winner	4
Insights from the Young Professionals Summit and Notes from Scholarship Participants	5-7
Texan Gives University of Nebraska \$20 Million for Entrepreneurship	8
Central Community College-Columbus Celebrates National Entrepreneurship Week with Style and Class	9-10
Trial Family Business Course Enters Second Semester at UNL	11
Preserving and Building Nebraska's Most Precious Assets	11
NebraskaEntrepreneur.com Creates a Digital Nexus	12
Learning the Business Behind a Business	13
Energizing Our Youth Research Study	14
Targeted Teaching Topic	15

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*(Continued on page 2)*

## NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK CELEBRATIONS ABOUND ACROSS NEBRASKA

*(Continued from page 1)*

### SBAM BIZ BREAK



One of the first events actually preceded E-Week by one day. The

Small Business Association of the Midlands planned their monthly Biz Break on Friday, February 19th to allow their members to learn about all the activities taking place around the state. Biz Break provided members the opportunity to network with others that share their entrepreneurial spirit while enjoying wine and appetizers and the chance to tour the Prouty Place art gallery and workshop.

The mission of the Small Business Association of the Midlands is to assist micro & small businesses to develop, grow and operate more efficiently. Their vision is to become the premier provider of education, coaching and networking for micro and small businesses. SBAM provides small businesses with both online and in-person assistance.

### CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE-COLUMBUS

CCC-Columbus once again was one of the leaders in hosting activities throughout the week. An Open House at their Entrepreneurship Center started the week, followed by presentations for Rotary Club, an Entrepreneur Appreciation Luncheon, panels of entrepreneurs presenting to local high schools, students and faculty participating in MarketPlace and the Quick Pitch competition, and concluded with a booth at the Columbus Home and Builders show.

Doris Lux and other CCC-Columbus staff members and students are to be commended for planning and participating in a tremendous list of great activities to celebrate National Entrepreneurship Week. For more details about their events and activities, read pages 9 and 10 of this issue.

### SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Southeast Community College, as always, was incredibly active with an array of events celebrating

National Entrepreneurship Week at their campuses in Beatrice, Milford, and Lincoln.

Business Expos were held at all three campuses on different days of Entrepreneurship Week. These Expos allowed SCC students, faculty, and staff to promote their businesses by showcasing products and services, including art, merchandise or crafts.

A “Meet the Experts” event was held on February 22nd at the SCC Entrepreneurship Center in Lincoln. Industry experts provided one-to-one consultations to discuss topics such as business coaching, finance, taxes and accounting, marketing and legal issues.

### CENTER FOR ENTERPRISE-MIDPLAINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Not to be outdone by their community college friends and



colleagues, the MidPlains Community College Center for Enterprise had a host of creative and fun activities during the week.

Play-Dough Economics/EntrepreneurShip Investigation allowed youth to create a prototype product out of Play-Dough and investigate what it means to be an entrepreneur. On Tuesday and Wednesday, “The Hows and Whys of Quick Books” rolled out the first class in a series of four in their Business Improvement Series. Also on Tuesday, Mark Wehner’s REEsults Coaching™ program provided a full-day of coaching individuals on how to THINK, ACT, and ACHIEVE like a successful entrepreneur.

On Wednesday, February 24th, a High School Business Plan Competition gave area high schools the opportunity to create a business concept, complete financial forms and a loan application, purchase real estate, create a promotional logo and TV advertisement, and present their work to a panel of judges.

Check out page 13 of this issue for a story that appeared in the North Platte Telegraph.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK CELEBRATIONS ABOUND ACROSS NEBRASKA

*(Continued from page 2)*

## NEBRASKA MARKETPLACE 2010



Rural entrepreneurs get support, encouragement, practical information, ideas and networking opportunities at the annual Center for Rural Affairs (CFRA) MarketPlace event.

More than 525 people registered to attend the fourth Nebraska event on February 23 and 24, 2010 at the Ramada Inn Convention Center in Kearney.

“The event is making a difference,” said Kathie Starkweather, CFRA’s director of rural opportunities and stewardship program. “It’s encouraging. Rural residents have started small businesses and created jobs in their communities as a result of the event,” she said.

Kathie continued, “With MarketPlace, CFRA aims to encourage local community support of entrepreneurs. The event is designed to help community leaders embrace local small businesses, which are important to local economies.”

## 2010 NEBRASKA SUMMIT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The annual Nebraska Summit on Entrepreneurship is a capstone event for National Entrepreneurship Week in Nebraska. Its focus is on addressing the gaps in education, training, skills, resources and general support that entrepreneurs need to successfully launch businesses.

The Summit brings together those committed to increasing entrepreneurship – university officials, educators, business development specialists, business leaders and government officials – with students and members of the public who want to be entrepreneurs.

The Gallup Organization, the Nebraska Business-Higher Education Forum and the University of Nebraska sponsored the fourth annual Summit. The

event drew about 400 people from across the state to the downtown Lincoln Holiday Inn on February 26, 2010 to share ideas, create partnerships and network.

James B. Milliken, president of the University of Nebraska, said difficult economic times should not discourage Nebraskan entrepreneurs.

“I believe that opportunities for entrepreneurs in Nebraska are ripe, despite the struggling economy, or more accurately, because of it,” he said.



President J.B. Milliken

Milliken cited a recent Kauffman Foundation study that found more than half the companies on a recent Fortune 500 list were launched in a recession or bear market. The same study suggested job creation from startup companies is less sensitive to market downturn compared to job creation from other companies.

In addition, Milliken said, studies cite Nebraska as a good place to work and live. For example, in February, Gallup.com named Nebraska the second best market in the nation for job creation. Fortune Small Business magazine named Omaha and Lincoln among the best ten mid-sized cities in which to launch a business.

## ADDITIONAL EVENTS



Other events held included a Minority Entrepreneurship Forum hosted by the Omaha Chamber of Commerce on February 23rd, an Entrepreneurship Seminar featuring Steve Schmutzer, founder of Firefly Medical at the John N. Harms Advanced Technology Center in Scottsbluff on February 25th, and a Social Impact Forum co-sponsored by the Omaha Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City on February 27th at Creighton University.



## FIRST ANNUAL 2010 'MAKE IT HAPPEN STUDENT QUICK PITCH COMPETITION' IS A WINNER

The Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship in partnership with the Southeast Community College Entrepreneurship Center and the Entrepreneurship Focus Program High School were the hosts for the 1st Annual Make it Happen—Student Quick Pitch Competition held on February 25, 2010.



Located in the Skybox Suites of Memorial Stadium, the competition gave Nebraska students an opportunity to showcase their

entrepreneurial, communication, and presentation skills through a short “quick pitch” proposal for a new business venture.

Students from a variety of Nebraska high schools, two year colleges, and four year colleges were invited to present their pitches, be evaluated, and receive feedback on the effectiveness of their pitch from a panel of entrepreneurially-minded experts from across Nebraska.

A total of over 200 judges, students, and interested community members attended the event.

Student comments included:

- *Great advice! The judges brought an outsiders point of view of things I never thought about; very refreshing.*
- *I learned that my idea is viable and that I should consider starting it.*
- *I made a lot of connections and built up my network. The ideas the judges bounced off me were really helpful.*
- *High quality judges, great feedback!*

Judges comments included:

- *I like to see the next generation of entrepreneurs.*
- *Excellent networking for students and for judges.*
- *Students were introduced to the real business environment, which can be critical, but in a constructive manner.*
- *The best outcome was judges lining up internships or meetings for students to further vet their idea. Great public speaking and confidence building opportunity.*

Sponsors for the event were the Able Foundation, NEBCO, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, University of Nebraska

Foundation, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Union Bank, and Pinnacle Bank. Prize money of \$1,000 went to each of the winners.



### University Division

Landon Bailey – York College

Morgan Allen – University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Brittany Benson – University of Nebraska-Lincoln

### Community College Division

Kimberly King – Southeast Community College

### High School Division

DeVante King – Lincoln Entrepreneurship Focus Program

Tanner O'Dell – Lincoln Entrepreneurship Focus Program



High School Division winners DeVante King and Tanner O'Dell, are surrounded by three very proud instructors from the Lincoln Public Schools Entrepreneurship Focus Program.



Over 200 judges, students, and community members attended the Quick Pitch event.

# INSIGHTS FROM THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

By Carol Ringenberg



On March 4, 2010, I was introduced to a very dynamic group of young professionals. As a winner of a scholarship offered by Partnerships for Innovation, I, along with 1,300 young professionals (YPs as they are called), attended the 2010 Young Professional Summit held at the Quest Center in Omaha.

The summit was organized by the Greater Omaha Young Professionals group. This dynamic group serves as a catalyst organization to retain and attract young professionals to the Greater Omaha area through engagement, opportunity and advocacy.

The Summit's sessions and speakers were impressive and engaging. And, as a seasoned (decades older than my fellow summit-goers) summit/conference volunteer planner, I couldn't help but ponder...how in the world did this group pull in talent such as keynote speaker, Blake Mycoskie founder and chief shoe giver for TOMS Shoes and William Taylor, founding editor of Fast Company, author and entrepreneur, plus 1,300 cash paying summit goers?

## PATRICIA MARTIN—THE RENAISSANCE GENERATION PHENOMENON



Opening speaker Patricia Martin, CEO and founder of Litlamp Communications stated that as members of the Renaissance Generation (also the title of her latest book), generation Xers have been brought up to let their views be k.n.o.w.n!"

Martin stated that "now, more than ever, YPs need to listen and develop 'soft' people skills." It's the mastery of these skills that is going to grow opportunity for communities and individuals. She spoke of the new

consumer, one who sees art, technology and entertainment as important components to their careers and overall life well being.

Want to learn more about Patricia Martin and her work about the Renaissance Generation? There's lots to learn at <http://patricia-martin.com>

## BLAKE MYCOSKIE—TOMS SHOES

Blake Mycoskie of TOMS shoes delivered an inspiring message of entrepreneurialism built on compassion. Mycoskie's first venture was as an Internet-based Drivers Education Company, which, after the take off of TOMS, sold out to his partners.



Blake Mycoskie positions himself in the midst of the TOMS Shoes display at the YP Summit.

The company name actually came about as a misread message concerning a meeting. TOMS was an abbreviation for "tomorrow's meeting" and an assistant thought it was the name of a new company!

His message is simple – "One buys One." For every pair of shoes purchased, TOMS donates one pair to a child in poverty. You can find more information about TOMS on the internet – worth looking at! And, proving that he knew he was in a ripe market at the Summit, he sold right at 600 pairs of TOMS shoes that day. Thus, showcasing the entrepreneurial principal that passion sells!

*(Continued on page 6)*

# INSIGHTS FROM THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

(Continued from page 5)

Some notable quotes from Blake:

“Word of mouth marketing is the best marketing you can ever get.”

“Partnership - partnership – partnership – partnership; can you hear what I said?? Partnership!”

“Incorporate giving as a part of your business plan. Giving does not only make you feel good BUT it’s good for your business.”



Check out more good stuff at [www.toms.com](http://www.toms.com) or follow Blake’s musings at <http://blakemycoskie.blogspot.com/>.

## WILL FLAVELL—YOUR DIGITAL RESUME

Will Flavell with Bozell, presented “Your Digital Resume.” The days of paper resumes are very close to joining other methods of communication and information transfer that have been drowned by the digital wave.

Flavell described what he called a Success Chain.

**Success**  
**Results/Outcomes**  
**Actions/Behaviors**  
**Attitude (Habits of Thought)**  
**Conditioning/Experience**  
**Spaced Repetition**

Flavell shared ideas and proven methods for YPs to develop a “job hitting” resume.

He was adamant that, “Relationships are more important than grades. Relationships are what are going to propel you to success.”

Closing out his session, Flavell stated “Employers have savvy, creative individuals beating down their door 24/7 – clean up your Facebook and blog. Savvy

employers know how to read – pictures and questionable options posted on Facebook and your blog show a lot about character. Is this really someone my company wants to invest in?”

In his presentation, “Positioning Yourself for Success—Advice and Strategies for Young Professionals,” Boyd Ober, President and owner of Leadership Resources, shared his insights to building the best life that you can with the resources and connections that are already at your finger tips. Life balance was the main force behind Ober’s message – gracefully learn from those who have gone before you.

Summit planners stirred excitement around issues facing Omaha by having the eager masses of energy-driven YP’ers commit to Omaha and get involved! They were taking names and writing down numbers!

Showcased were issues facing most mid-sized cities such as: going green, transportation, fighting poverty, keeping the arts alive and public policy. I found “Ghost of 300 Squares” the most intriguing by far. This activity gave you the opportunity to visit the small living concept, 300 SQUARE.



objective to acquire the biggest house possible, is changing. Wow!

The Summit carried forward key messages including the importance of partnerships with organizations, nurturing relationships that will benefit a life time, hard work, and being committed to what you’re doing. Omaha Young Professionals were challenged to work together and build the Omaha that they will want to work, live and thrive in.

And, to answer my question at the beginning of this article, the Young Professionals Summit was possible

(Continued on page 7)



## INSIGHTS FROM THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT

*(Continued from page 6)*

through strategic corporate partnerships-plain and simple. Bottom line, it was built on relationships!

After a day of over-the-top excitement and energy, fast moving sessions, and seeing every type of technology that can be attached to the human body, I observed just how “smartly sensible” my style of footwear was

that day compared to the masses, and smiled.

I thank Partnerships for Innovation for granting me the opportunity to an extraordinarily engaging day!

(Photo of Blake Mycoskie on page six courtesy of Malone & Company)

## NOTES FROM OTHER YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT PFI SCHOLARSHIP ATTENDEES

One of the requirements for those receiving Partnerships for Innovation scholarships to attend the Young Professionals Summit was to share a synopsis of what they gained from participating.



Following are some of their notes and comments that may be of interest to Nebraska Entrepreneurship News readers.

### SUSTAINABILITY: THRIVING IN TODAY'S ECONOMY

Dustin Penas, a participant from Papillion LaVista South High School attended a session by Marcella Thompson of ConAgra Foods.

According to Dustin, “Marcella was very interesting in her ideas of companies that are so-called ‘going green.’ She stressed the idea of climate change; how perception is reality.”



A key point was that, “It’s not enough to be green, you have to be better. Sustainability is more than recycling at work. Going green should be integrated into business strategy, it’s not an add-on.”

### SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION IN ACTION

Heather Nelson, Executive MBA-Entrepreneurship Instructor for Metro Community College, really loved the session on Innovation and Creativity.

She enthused, “Attendance at the Young Professional Summit caused me to come home and immediately use my energy and ideas towards two significant endeavors.”

Blake Mycoskie, Chief Shoe Giver at TOMS Shoes (see page five), shared his story of business creation which has now been included in a new teaching module created for ENTR 1050–Intro To Entrepreneurship, introducing the concept of **Social Entrepreneurship**.

During his discussion, Blake mentioned a documentary video, now available, which Ms. Nelson was able to obtain several copies of, free of charge. Nelson will share them with her Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) colleague schools at the next meeting in May.

Nelson stated, “This truly was the most inspirational and down-to-earth presentation I have heard in a long time.”

Nelson also enjoyed Angela Galloway’s presentation on Innovation in Action and can’t wait to read a book Galloway cited in her talk by John Sweeney entitled *Innovation at The Speed Of Laughter*.

## TEXAN GIVES UNL \$20 MILLION



Engler, now 80, is a legend among U.S. cattle feeders for helping establish the

feedlot industry in Texas. He made news in Nebraska Monday (March 1, 2010) when he announced a \$20 million gift to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to help aspiring ag entrepreneurs.

Engler, a Nebraska native, is probably best known among non-ag folks as the fellow who led a defamation lawsuit against Oprah Winfrey over a 1996 program on mad cow disease. Engler and his fellow cattlemen lost the suit, but they said they made their point about the safety of U.S. beef.

On Monday, he joined University of Nebraska officials at a press conference to announce the gift from the Paul F. and Virginia J. Engler Foundation for NU to establish an agribusiness entrepreneurship program.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman described it as the largest gift ever to the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

But at age 13, Engler was a boy chafing at a strict father who believed his children should work hard—without pay. While his father, who owned a filling station near Bassett, Neb., was away on a business trip, Engler slipped off to the sale barn and bought 100 head of cattle without permission.

Since he didn't have a dime, he afterwards talked the auctioneer into loaning him the money to pay for the animals.

Back home, he said he braced himself for the "worst licking of my life." But when his father found out, he simply shook his son's hand, said he was proud of him — and took him to the bank to get a loan with a little better interest rate.

Some 65 years later, Engler's company feeds about half a million cattle at a time at locations across northern Texas and southwest Kansas.

His Cactus Feeders is described as the largest privately owned cattle feeding operation in the world.

Engler says he wants to encourage young

entrepreneurs who have that same "fire in the belly" to succeed.

That's why he made the donation to his alma mater to support the Paul F. Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program at UNL. The money will be used to provide coursework, a lecture series, training camps, internships and even a venture capital fund to support student start-up businesses.

"I think about myself and my age, and I still have fire in my belly," said Engler, who remains active in the day-to-day operation of his business.

"We need to identify these boys and girls who have that fire in the belly when they are young and then when they come to the university, expose them to a curriculum that teaches risk — how to evaluate it and how to manage it — because if you do not take risk as an entrepreneur, you are not going to make it."

Perlman and NU President J.B. Milliken said the gift is in keeping with the university's goals to foster entrepreneurship and to make life sciences a signature program at UNL.

NU Foundation President Clarence Castner described it as a "transformative gift."

"It's a visionary gift," said Milliken, noting that 70 percent of young Nebraskans interviewed in a Gallup Organization study said they want to start their own businesses.

"We want to capture that spirit, to give students the tools they need to take that spirit and be successful in Nebraska."

Engler said that although his father ran a filling station, he owned cattle because he thought it was important his children know how to milk a cow. He eventually assembled a small herd with Engler, who said he "didn't like greasing wheels and changing oil," responsible for its care.

By the time he graduated high school, Engler had made enough money that he wanted to continue with his cattle herd. But his father insisted that he use his savings to go to college.

*(Continued on page 10)*



## CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE-COLUMBUS CELEBRATES NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK WITH STYLE AND CLASS

The Columbus campus of Central Community College has been one of the most active and engaged members of the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Task Force (NET-Force) since its creation. Among its many efforts to educate, engage, and empower entrepreneurs, NET-Force has been the key coordinating group for National Entrepreneurship Week. CCC-Columbus has been front and center in promoting E-Week throughout central Nebraska, with 2010 another banner year of activities and events.

### E-SHIP CENTER OPEN HOUSE



The E-ship Center in Columbus held an open house on Monday, February 22nd. Refreshments were provided for students. Small business owners Valorie

Miksch, owner of My Style Wellness, and Betty Osborn, owner of Time in a Treasure, were available during the day to visit with students about the E-Ship Center and the programs available to students.

Columbus entrepreneurship students attended MarketPlace in Kearney on Wednesday, February 24th. This fourth annual small business conference and expo was held at the Ramada Inn Convention Center. It was a wonderful place to discover, learn, grow and network. The learning tracks included marketing, agriculture, financing, community development, technology, business development, youth, women business owners, policy and Hispanic.

High school students who were enrolled in the Entrepreneurs-In-Action Program at Central Community College-Columbus were active participants at MarketPlace. Entrepreneurs-in-Action is a program for high school juniors and seniors who are interested in running their own business.

As part of Entrepreneurs-in-Action, the budding entrepreneurs have the opportunity to meet with local business leaders, learn how to start and operate a business, learn how to write a business plan, and

explore marketing and finance options. At the end of the seven-month program, students will have developed a working business plan and then start and operate their own enterprises.



During MarketPlace, the following High School Entrepreneurs participated in a Jingle-A-Thon activity. This is a marketing tool that large companies use for creation of ideas for products and services they sell.

Lauren Bygland, a senior at Boone Central. Lauren's business is "A Green Revolution."

Kayla Kettelson, a senior at Boone Central. Kayla's business is "Simply Divine Cakes & More."

Dakota Olson, a senior at Boone Central. Dakota's business is "Little Buckaroos Lessons."

Curtis Thompson, a junior at Boone Central. Curtis's business is "Thompson Manufacturing."

Marina Karel, a junior at Scotus Central. Marina's business is "Karel's Woodworking."

Molly Smith, a junior at Scotus Central. Molly's business is "Treats for the Sweet."

Valorie Miksch of My Style Wellness, a CCC incubator business, attended the event at MarketPlace. Doris Lux and Mary Ann Humphrey also attended from the Columbus campus. Kathy Gladem, business instructor at Boone Central High School, attended the event as well.

### LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS VISIT AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Local entrepreneurs from the Columbus area visited area high schools and presented information about

*(Continued on page 10)*

## CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE-COLUMBUS CELEBRATES NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK

*(Continued from page 9)*

entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship during E-Week. Rich Chochon, Elda Reinhardt, Lynn Higgins, Jon Hitz, Kelly Daniels Jackson, and Lynette Dreifurst shared their time, talent, and expertise with students at Scotus High School, Lakeview High School, and Boone Central.

### ENTREPRENEURS LUNCHEON AT DUSTERS

Local business owners attended a luncheon on Thursday, February 25th at Dusters to celebrate Entrepreneurship Week. Sue Jensen, a graduate of Nebraska Wesleyan University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration/Finance and a Masters Degree from Peru State College in Organizational Management with an emphasis in Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, was the featured luncheon speaker. Sue's presentation was on the "Need for Ethics in Today's Entrepreneurial World."

### QUICK PITCH COMPETITION



2010 Make it Happen Student Quick Pitch Competition was held on Thursday, February 25th at Memorial Stadium Club in Lincoln.

Valorie Miksch of My Style Wellness, a CCC incubator business, attended and competed with her quick pitch.

Scott Jansen, owner of American Reaper Arms, competed in the event as well. Doris Lux, Director of the E-Ship Center Columbus also attended the event. Cash prizes were awarded to the winning pitch.

### 2010 NEBRASKA SUMMIT ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

2010 Nebraska Summit on Entrepreneurship was held on Friday, February 26th at the Holiday Inn Downtown in Lincoln, Nebraska. Some of the different sessions included Family Business in Nebraska-Legacies of Success, the Big Picture, Entrepreneurship: A Student's Perspective, outreach, finance, and action. Valorie Miksch, owner of My Style Wellness a CCC incubator business, attended the event with Doris Lux and Mary Ann Humphrey.

### E-SHIP SURVEY

Those who reside in the Central Community College-Columbus area are encouraged to take an online survey for the Entrepreneurship Center to inform and guide the Center staff about what services are important to their constituents who may be interested in starting and/or operating a business. You can find the E-Ship Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CCCEShipSurvey>.

### EVENTS AT CCC-COLUMBUS

For information about CCC-Columbus Entrepreneurship Center activities, contact Doris Lux, Entrepreneurship Center Director, 402.562.1242.

## TEXAN GIVES UNL \$20 MILLION

*(Continued from page 8)*

After graduating from the University of Nebraska in 1951, he worked for a cattle company in Valentine, Neb., before going to work for Louis Dinklage, a major cattle feeder near Wisner, Neb.

He moved to Texas in 1960, where he became one of the first feedlot operators in that state. He married Virginia "Jinx" Engler, a fellow NU graduate who grew up in Valentine, in 1981. She died in 1996 at age 64.

Before making the donation, Engler said he spent considerable time with IANR Vice Chancellor John Owens discussing how best to teach entrepreneurship to students.

"If we can identify them early, I guarantee you, if you can't teach 'em, I can teach 'em," he said.

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## TRIAL FAMILY BUSINESS COURSE ENTERS SECOND SEMESTER AT UNL

In Nebraska, family businesses are considered a core value of the economy. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Business Administration now offers a class where students of family businesses learn skills on developing their business.

In Entrepreneurship 322, students are taught about what it means to be part of a family business and how they can continue to keep up with the competition.

UNL lecturer David Specht, a certified financial planner, teaches the class, which is currently in its second semester.

Specht said when he first arrived in Nebraska from California three years ago, he noticed older family businesses dominated the commercial landscape. He went to UNL to see if any classes were taught on the subject and discovered there wasn't enough funding to field a course of that nature.

"The family business is the biggest opportunity to grow Nebraska's economy," Specht said. "I want to arm (the students) with questions they need to have answered."

Jim Abel of Nebco Inc. contributed an undisclosed amount to UNL to give the class a two-semester test run, according to Specht.

"I had 18 students last semester, mostly juniors and seniors," he said. "This semester, I have around 32



Nancy Gade of Olsson Associates speaks to Dave Specht's Entrepreneurship 350 class about family communication.

students, mostly seniors."

Many of the students come from family business backgrounds.

Specht said the class content is largely made up of guest speakers from the Nebraska family business community. In the past, the class has had the likes of Dave Wimmer, CEO of Wimmer's Meats and Sid Dillon of Sid Dillon Auto.

Thursday's guest speaker was Nancy Gade of Olsson Associates. Gade presented a seminar called

*(Continued on page 12)*

## PRESERVING AND BUILDING NEBRASKA'S MOST PRECIOUS ASSET—THE FAMILY BUSINESS

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be offering a three-hour seminar focused on preserving the family business. The seminar will take place on April 21, 2010 from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at the Ferguson Center at 700 South 16th Street in Lincoln. The cost is \$129.00.

Dave Specht, a lecturer in Family Business Management and a family business consultant with Executive Wealth Management in Lincoln will lead the seminar.

Some of the key objectives of the seminar will be for participants to (1) Gain an understanding of The Continuity Quotient™ and how it works to measure and assist family-owned businesses (2) Explore role dynamics of participants in family business (3) Discuss transitioning business-owners and their Superhero Archetypes (4) Learn how to retain and reward key non-family employees during transitions (5) Participate in a family business case study.



## TRIAL FAMILY BUSINESS COURSE AT UNL

*(Continued from page 11)*

“Communication and Family Business.”

“I have worked with my family for over 20 years,” Gade said. “It took a long time for me to listen to my family’s opinions.”

In order to better understand how to run their family businesses, Specht has his students dig deep and find out about their family.

“Why are you the way you are?” he asks. “Know your past.”

Senior business administration major Alan Wirth said he took the class because he thinks he’ll get into his family’s business.

“My dad and uncle are farmers,” he said. “I came from a smaller family business, so it’s interesting to learn about different ones.”

Gade focused mostly on confrontation and arguments. Her presentation, based off Dr. John Gottman’s “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” speaks of criticism, defensiveness, stonewalling and contempt within a family.



“Three of them can exist in a relationship and be fine,” she said. “If contempt exists, the relationship will almost always fail.”

Specht said he has high hopes the class will be renewed for next year.

“I think the students love the class,” he said. “The questions that they ask have to deal with their own personal lives.”

By Andrew Lamberson. Published Friday, February 19, 2010. Reprinted with permission of the Daily Nebraskan.

## NEBRASKAENTREPRENEUR.COM CREATES A DIGITAL NEXUS FOR NEBRASKA’S BUSINESS TRAILBLAZERS



Entrepreneurship isn’t easy.

The innovation required to spearhead a new business often means entrepreneurs are treading ground where few, if any, have ventured before. Anyone who has ever taken the plunge and started their own business can tell you the ever-changing marketplace presents a lot to keep track of.

The University of Nebraska felt there was a need for a central hub to connect entrepreneurs, and to make them aware of the community resources available to help their businesses thrive. To that end, NebraskaEntrepreneur.com was created.

Or perhaps “refurbished” would be a better word. The domain NebraskaEntrepreneur.com has been around for several years, but the early iteration of the site (a vanilla business directory with little in the way of interactivity) fell into a broken-link-laden state of disrepair some time ago.

After a conversation between Matt Sherman, co-founder of Three Pillars Media, and Pete Kotsiopoulos, Vice President for University Affairs of the University of Nebraska system, the two discovered they both wanted the same thing: to create a digital nexus for Nebraska’s business trailblazers.



NU handed the Nebraska Entrepreneur domain over to Three Pillars Media, who forged it into the site you see today.

Put simply, the goal is to build an organic resource for Nebraska’s entrepreneurs. The site will strive to do more than just list business names and mission statements. By connecting the state’s businesses through their respective technologies of choice — be they Facebook profiles, Twitter pages, RSS feeds or something brand new — the hope is to build a vibrant community where those passionate about what they do can draw from the fervor of other people with concordant ambitions.

## LEARNING THE BUSINESS BEHIND A BUSINESS

High school students from ten area schools came to North Platte on Wednesday to learn the value and importance of entrepreneurship at the fourth annual E-day event at Mid-Plains Community College.

"These students have incredible minds and incredible ideas," said organizer Melissa Garcia, who is the account manager for the Mid-Plains Center for Enterprise.

She said one of the primary purposes of E-day is to help the students understand the importance of entrepreneurship and that they can do anything they want and start a successful career right here as an entrepreneur.

About 70 high school juniors and seniors from throughout the area participated in E-day at MPCC, which was one of several organized as part of National Entrepreneurship Week.

Students were placed in groups of five and challenged to come up with a business concept based on what they are passionate about or based on a need that they saw within their community.

Garcia said the students were then taken through the steps of creating a business plan, so that they could better understand the concept of actually operating a business.

E-Day, or Entrepreneurship Day, was designed to help students develop the critical entrepreneurship skills necessary to survive and succeed in today's business world. Volunteers from the NPCC and McCook Community College chapters of Phi Beta Lambda, the student business organization, helped with the event.

"It was important for us to show them the business of owning a business," Garcia said.

At the end of the day, each group presented their business plan to the rest of the teams. These presentations were judged, and prizes were awarded to the top three teams.

Garcia noted her appreciation to the business department at MPCC for their help, and also the schools for their support in sending their students. She noted that attendance at E-day has doubled.



Members of the green team discuss their business plan for their company called "Wicked Entertainment" during E-Day at Mid-Plains Community College. Pictured, from left, are Tessa Kraus of Ogallala, Ross Bricker of Paxton and Nick Long of Mullen.

"It's just great to see everybody understanding the importance of keeping our kids here for the success of our communities," Garcia added.

### Winners in the E-day contest are as follows:

First place - "Saddle Up Coffee" group: Samuel Fisher of Paxton, Dani Ellis of Callaway, Owen Saner of Sandhills and Megan Aguallo of Sutherland.

Second place - "CCMP Photography" group: Jessica Janovits of McCook, Cody McKnight of Ogallala, Megan Hanna of Thedford and Ceaser Maldonado of Sargent.

Third place - "Compass Graphics" team: Blair Youngs of Paxton, Brett Barnes of Sandhills, Justin Belsky of Wallace, Hannah Meyer of Callaway and Christian Hoffman of McCook.

By John Lindenberg, Reporter, The North Platte Telegraph. Published February 25, 2010. Reprinted with permission of The North Platte Telegraph.

## 'ENERGIZING OUR YOUTH' RESEARCH STUDY SHOWS YOUNG PEOPLE VALUE THEIR COMMUNITIES

Community leaders and developers have recognized for some time that the key to the renewal of rural areas lies in attracting people to their communities and keeping them there. How to stem the multi-decade outflow of young adults from America's countryside and attract new residents have been topics of concern for decades.

Now, an examination of junior high and high school students' perspectives on their hometowns, conducted across select Midwestern states, suggests a tangible answer provided by the young people themselves.



The news is good. In short, many students would elect to stay in or return to their communities, especially if there are viable

employment opportunities available. Strong emotional ties related to families and growing up in rural America are powerful draws, and most believe that their home communities would be a great place to raise their own families.

The implications for rural communities are clear. Actions must be taken to ensure that young people view their hometowns and regions as places where economic and educational opportunities are available.

### THE RESEARCH: BACKGROUND

For the past five years, detailed surveys completed by junior high and high school youth in three Midwestern states have yielded startling results that highlight how broadly communities are underestimating their very best asset youth. Rural communities have persistently, if unintentionally, overlooked involving youth in the shaping of their own futures. Through the absence of definitive strategies that focus and engage the young, rural communities have continuously failed to create constructs that offer young residents quality employment after high school or college, and substantive involvement in community development efforts.

Through a joint undertaking of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, Hometown Competitiveness (HTC), Kansas Hometown Prosperity (HTP), and the Connie Fund with support and partnership from the Nebraska Community Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a series of surveys was administered in 39 counties in Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas to explore whether or not youth would elect to remain in their communities and to ascertain why or why not. Schools were selected based on the involvement of their communities in HTC, HTP, and other community development initiatives.

The survey instrument was a web-based tool, administered before communities undertook new youth engagement activities, that explored students' plans for the future with a special focus on their home communities and some questions about business ownership. Students completed the surveys in a controlled classroom setting.

### SURVEY RESULTS-THOUSANDS RESPOND

The 6,059 Midwestern youth responding had some valuable thoughts to share—despite the fact that 72% of survey respondents indicated that no adult had ever asked their views on how to make their community more attractive for young people.

Of first importance, 43% of the young people rated their communities as an above average to excellent place to live.

Many (27%) said that they would like to stay in their communities after high school and another 34% indicated that they would return upon the right conditions.



The big “if” for youth in both these categories was whether or not quality career opportunities would be available to them in their hometown communities.

The current perception shared by 43% of the students was that greater chances for economic and professional success exist beyond the bounds of the rural regions they call home.

*(Continued on page 16)*



## Targeted Teaching Topic



### OMAHA WORLD-HERALD BUYS WIKICITY

By Gina Chen, October 29, 2009

The Omaha World-Herald Co. announced in October 2009 the purchase of WikiCity, a hyperlocal site with local content for just more than 22,000 U.S. communities that I wrote about here in August.



WikiCity, which started in late 2008 and launched publicly this summer, is a bit like CitySearch with its telephone-book-like listings of restaurants and businesses and similar to BackFence with its aim to be a user-generated hyperlocal site. But it lets readers update their own communities pages, giving a bit of a Wikipedia feel. One of the best potential benefits of something like WikiCity would be to team up with local news organizations.

That, in essence, is what happened. The Omaha World-Herald Co.'s flagship publication is the Omaha World-Herald, with a 200,000 Sunday and a 160,000 daily circulation, said Joel Long, the company's director of public relations. The privately held, employee-owned company owns 9 dailies in Nebraska and Iowa, 22 weeklies, and 23 other publications. Buying WikiCity "offers us a new and exciting opportunity of looking at other avenues of connecting with our readers," Long told me.

Neither Long nor WikiCity's founder Pat Lazure would reveal details of the purchases, except to say that Lazure will become president of the new World Interactive Group, which will run WikiCity. Lazure started WikiCity with his business partner, Rohit Keshwani, a pre-med undergrad at the University of Minnesota.

Long said company officials haven't yet decided whether WikiCity will have a presence on the World-Herald website. Lazure said the idea is WikiCity will maintain its own brand, but readers might eventually be able to access it through the newspapers' websites. He said advertising was the expected source of revenue for WikiCity.

What's cool about this for the newspaper business is it's an example of a newspaper redefining its role and product. This sale seems like a realization that the product isn't news; it's helping readers make sense of their world in every way possible. I think more newspapers will need to do this as their business continues to evolve.

It's also an example of a tech-based company working with a news company, a combination that I believe will become more vital as time goes on. Technology has always gone hand in glove with gathering and disseminating news, from the days when technology meant lead type and a hand press.

Today, it's an even more important connection. News organization cannot survive if they don't understand and use the rapidly changing technologies. And to understand them well enough to be competitive, newspapers must include people from the technology field among their staffs.

As Lazure puts it: "What does this mean for newspapers? I think newspaper are looking to spread out and doing different verticals. I see WikiCity as one of those verticals to keep readers on their sites." I know I'll be watching to see whether this partnership works and what the rest of us can learn from it.

Original publication, October 29, 2009. Reprinted with permission of Nieman Journalism Lab.

# 'ENERGIZING OUR YOUTH' RESEARCH STUDY SHOWS YOUNG PEOPLE VALUE THEIR COMMUNITIES

(Continued from page 14)

## WHY STAY?

Why would youth like to stay in their hometown communities? Family ties and a good place to raise a family were two top motivators for 45% of the survey participants to remain in or return to their communities. These reasons signify potent emotional ties to the places where the youth grew up, and rural community leaders should recognize this strong social capital for its true value as a building block for revitalizing communities through the "attraction" of their youth.

Second, the young respondents would stay if their rural communities did not encourage youth to seek their futures elsewhere instead of providing opportunities for them at home. ***Almost 600 students remarked that they had been encouraged to leave.***

This pattern holds true whether the students were looking at options for higher education or seeking jobs. An unusually high number of the survey's Midwestern students (86%) plan to go on to college.

Third, a number of young people expressed entrepreneurial aspirations that could be realized right at home. Young people may well represent a rural region's economic ability to grow. A series of responses regarding entrepreneurship shows a significant amount of interest in small business ownership. Forty-four percent (44%) of those surveyed stated an interest in business ownership, and in fact, 14% of the population answering the survey already owned businesses. Added to this, 45% of all respondents said that they would like to take an entrepreneurship class linked with hands-on learning experiences.



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For timely information on topics related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (K-20) at the local, state, regional, national and international levels and to share information with others, sign up for the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Education Listserv log on to:

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